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"Each square has a black-drink cook, and two or three young warriors that attend every morning when black-drink is to be taken, and warn the people to assemble by beating a drum." [87]

Hawkins probably had the square of Kasihta more particularly in mind and Swan that of Otciapofa. From Bartram we have two different descriptions, one more generalized, the other a particular account of the square of Atasi. The first and briefer of these runs as follows:

"The Public Square of the Creeks consists of four buildings of equal size, placed one upon each side of a quadrangular court. The principal or Council House is divided transversely into three equal apartments, separated from each other by a low clay wall. This building is also divided longitudinally into two nearly equal parts; the foremost or front is an open piazza, where are seats for the council. The middle apartment is for the king (*mico*), the great war chief, second head man, and other venerable and worthy chiefs and warriors. The two others are for the warriors and citizens generally. The back apartment of this house is quite close and dark, and without entrances, except three very low arched holes or doors for admitting the priests. Here are deposited all the most valuable public things, as the eagle's tail or national standard, the sacred calumet, the drums, and all the apparatus of the priests. None but the priests having the care of these articles are admitted; and it is said to be certain death for any other person to enter.

"Fronting this is another building, called the "Banqueting House;" and the edifices upon either hand are halls to accommodate the people on public occasions, as feasts, festivals, etc. The three buildings last mentioned are very much alike, and differ from the Council House only in not having the close back apartment." [88]

His description of the Atasi square is much longer:

"The great or public square generally stands alone, in the centre and highest part of the town: it consists of four-square or cubical buildings, or houses of one story, uniform, and of the same dimensions, so situated as to form an exact tetragon, encompassing an area of half an acre of ground, more or less, according to the strength or largeness of the town, or will of the inhabitants: there is a passage or avenue at each corner of equal width: each building is constructed of a wooden frame fixed strongly in the earth, the walls filled in, and neatly plastered with clay mortar; close on three sides, that is the back and two ends, except within about two feet of the wall plate or eaves, which is left open for the purpose of a window and to admit a free passage of the air; the front or side next to the area is quite open like a piazza. One of these buildings is properly the coun-

[87] Swan in Schoolcraft, Ind. Tribes, vol. v, pp. 264-265.
[88] Bartram in Trans. Am. Ethnol. Soc., vol. III, pp. 33-34.

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726 796 talisman, which he carries with himself religiously; it is a little sack in which there are certain stones and some pieces of cloth which he has taken from the clothing of the head chief, on returning from war. If the band chief should forget the sack he would not be able to command, and he would become a simple soldier during the entire expedition.[a]

"The Tastanégy or head war chief presents himself at the rendezvous promptly on the day indicated, and he is sure to find the youth assembled there; then he places himself at the head of the army, makes all of the arrangements he considers proper, without being obliged to render an account to anyone, and, certain that the discipline and his orders will be punctually observed, he marches against the enemy with confidence.

726 272 "When the army is thus prepared to march, each subordinate chief must be provided with a drink which they call the war medicine. This medicine consists in a slightly purgative liquor, which each warrior must take for three successive days before setting out to war.

"The Indians attach very great virtue to this war medicine and they have such confidence in it that it would be difficult for a head war chief to take any part of his army if it were deprived of it. He would be exposed to the greatest danger, if, by a surprise, he was forced to make [his army] fight before having complied with this duty. If he suffered a reverse, which could not fail to happen, because the soldiers would have no confidence, and would be defeated in advance by their superstitious fears, the chief would be accused of having brought on [the disaster] by his negligence in not having had the war medicine distributed, and he would become responsible for all of the events resulting from it.

"If this custom presents such dangers to the chief of the army, it furnishes him in exchange with exceptional means for the success of his enterprises. There are two medicines, the great and the little, and it is for the head chief to designate which must be taken. The great medicine makes a fanatic, so to speak, of the soldier; when he is filled with this medicine, he believes himself invulnerable, like Achilles dipped in the Styx. The little medicine serves to diminish the dangers in his eyes. Full of confidence in his chief, he is easily persuaded that, if he offers him only the little war medicine, it is

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[a] Elsewhere Milfort gives the following account of the way in which the bits of clothing were obtained: "When a campaign is finished, and the army has returned, all the band chiefs accompany the Tastanégy or head war chief as far as the door of his house; and there the two oldest war chiefs descend from their horses, and set about stripping him completely; during this time two other chiefs present him with a piece of bark and some leaves of trees out of which a belt is made for him. As soon as he is disrobed, the two old men who have taken off his clothes tear them into small pieces and distribute them among all of the band chiefs who have been engaged in the expedition, and each of them puts his portion into the little medicine sack of which I have spoken.

"The army attaches such great virtue to this little sack that the chief who should forget it would not be able to command. When this distribution has been made, they sing a war song, each discharges his gun, and they separate to return to their respective homes." (Mém., pp. 321-322.)

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because the circumstances do not demand the great one. It is for the sagacity of the chief to turn this superstition to advantage. 726 272

"This medicine, of the moral effect of which I have just spoken, has two effects purely physical. The first is that the Indians are very fond of getting drunk on strong liquors, and it is necessary to find a means of depriving them of these without exciting their murmurs. The medicine, great or little, offers this means, since, before taking it, they may not drink any liquor, a matter which they observe very religiously; and the chief, having the right to order it when he thinks that it is proper, can, in that way, preserve the utmost sobriety in the army. The second is that this medicine is really purgative, and the warrior thus purged is less endangered by the wounds which he receives, and which, in consequence, heal very promptly unless they are mortal. These people have still another means of diminishing the danger from their wounds, which is to fight almost naked. They recognize that a woolen garment, some particles of which almost always remain in the wounds, makes them much more difficult to heal and more dangerous. Thus shrewdness and religion, supporting each other, lend mutual assistance, and turn to the profit of those who know how to use them. [273]

"The Moskoquis observe, during war, a very rigorous discipline; they can neither eat nor drink without the order of their chiefs. I have seen them go without drinking, even when swimming across a river, because circumstances had obliged their chief to forbid it to them under pain of depriving them of their little war medicine, that is, of the influence of the talisman." [a] 726

"When they go to war they observe a very rigorous discipline. At the moment when they approach the enemy, they march in single file, the chief of the party at their head, and so arrange it that all the following warriors step in the footprints of the first. Even those are sometimes concealed by the last man by means of grass. In this manner they prevent the enemy from telling their number. When they halt or camp they form a circle, and leave open only one passage large enough to admit one man. They seat themselves with their legs crossed, and each has his gun beside him. The chief faces the entrance of the circle, where no soldier can go out without his permission. When it is time to rest he gives the signal, and then no one is allowed to move. The awaking is also by a signal.

"It is usually the head chief who indicates the positions, [b] and who has the sentinels placed charged with caring for the safety of the

[a] "I have already said that the great medicine or general medicine is taken before setting out."—Millet. It is not altogether clear whether Millet means that they were to be threatened with deprivation of the little war medicine taken internally or the medicine sack, but the former was probably intended. Millet, Mém., pp. 288-289.

[b] Elsewhere he tells us that particular clans had the right to certain positions when on a war expedition. "These same [privileged] families, that is, the young warriors who belong to them, usually march to war ahead, and the war chief takes care to preserve this prerogative, unless circumstances compel another disposition. It is a means of consolation from which he sometimes derives great advantage." (p. 285.)

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By "the royal standard" Bartram means nothing more than the feathered calumet. The drum, as we learn on all hands, was used to call assemblies at the square for whatever purpose, and bear skins were usually laid down for the principal men and their guests on such occasions. The all-night dance mentioned at the end was a familiar accompaniment of the daily lives of the people.

CEREMONY OF THE ASI

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At least one ceremony is involved here which was more religious than social and I will proceed to a more intimate account of it. This is the ceremony connected with the taking of the *Ilex vomitoria* or "black drink." The longest and best description of this is given by Swan and is as follows:

"The ceremony of the Black-drink is a military institution, blended with religious opinions.

"The black-drink is a strong decoction of the shrub well known in the Carolinas by the name of Cassina, or the Uupon tea.

"The leaves are collected, parched in a pot until brown, boiled over a fire in the center of the square, dipped out and poured from one pan or cooler into another, and back again, until it ferments and produces a large quantity of white froth, from which, with the purifying qualities the Indians ascribe to it, they style it white-drink; but the liquor of itself, which, if strong, is nearly as black as molasses, is by the white people universally called black-drink.

"It is a gentle diuretic, and, if taken in large quantities, sometimes affects the nerves. If it were qualified with sugar, etc., it could hardly be distinguished in taste from strong bohea tea.

"Except rum, there is no liquor of which the Creek Indians are so excessively fond. In addition to their habitual fondness for it, they have a religious belief that it infallibly possesses the following qualities, viz.: That it purifies them from all sin, and leaves them in a state of perfect innocence; that it inspires them with an invincible prowess in war; and that it is the only solid cement of friendship, benevolence, and hospitality. Most of them really seem to believe that the Great Spirit or Master of breath has communicated the virtues of the black-drink to them, and them only (no other Indians being known to use it as they do),[23a] and that it is a peculiar blessing bestowed on them, his chosen people. Therefore, a stranger going among them can not recommend himself to their protection in any manner so well as by offering to partake of it with them as often as possible.

"The method of serving up black-drink in the square is as follows, viz:

[23a] This was by no means the case since, in one form or another, the drink was used by practically all Southeastern tribes. See below.

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"The warriors and chiefs being assembled and seated, three young men acting as masters of ceremony on the occasion, each having a gourd or calabash full of the liquor, place themselves in front of the three greatest chiefs or warriors, and announce that they are ready by the word choh! After a short pause, stooping forward, they run up to the warriors and hold the cup or shell parallel to their mouths; the warriors receive it from them, and wait until the young men fall back and adjust themselves to give what they term the yohullah, or black-drink note. As the young men begin to aspirate the note, the great men place the cups to their mouths, and are obliged to drink during the aspirated note of the young men, which, after exhausting their breath, is repeated on a finer key, until the lungs are no longer inflated. This long aspiration is continued near half a minute, and the cup is taken from the mouth of the warrior who is drinking at the instant the note is finished. The young men then receive the cups from the chiefs or head warriors, and pass them to the others of inferior rank, giving them the word choh! but not the yohullah note. None are entitled to the long black-drink note but the great men, whose abilities and merit are rated on this occasion by the capacity of their stomachs to receive the liquor.

"It is generally served round in this manner three times [24] at every meeting; during the recess of serving it up, they all sit quietly in their several cabins, and amuse themselves by smoking, conversing, exchanging tobacco, etc., and in disgorging what black-drink they have previously swallowed.

"Their mode of disgorging, or spouting out the black-drink, is singular, and has not the most agreeable appearance. After drinking copiously, the warrior, by hugging his arms across his stomach, and leaning forward, disgorges the liquor in a large stream from his mouth, to the distance of six or eight feet. Thus, immediately after drinking, they begin spouting on all sides of the square, and in every direction; and in that country, as well as in others more civilized, it is thought a handsome accomplishment in a young fellow to be able to spout well.

"They come into the square and go out again, on these occasions, without formality." [25]

The following is Adair's account, which shows that the ceremony was almost identical among the Chickasaw:

"There is a species of tea, that grows spontaneously, and in great plenty, along the sea-coast of the two Carolinas, Georgia, and East and West Florida, which we call *Yopon*, or *Cusseena*: the Indians transplant, and are extremely fond of it; they drink it on certain

[24] Probably this should be "four times."
[25] Schoolcraft, Ind. Tribes, vol. v, pp. 280-287.

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stated occasions, and in their most religious solemnities, with awful invocations; but the women, and children, and those who have not successfully accompanied their holy ark, *pro Aris et Focis*, dare not even enter the sacred square, when they are on this religious duty; otherwise they would be dry-scratched with snakes teeth, fixed in the middle of a split reed, or a piece of wood, without the privilege of warm water to supple the stiffened skin.[28a]

"When this beloved liquid, or supposed holy drink-offering, is fully prepared, and fit to be drank, one of their *Magi* brings two old consecrated conch-shells, out of a place appropriated for containing the holy things, and delivers them into the hands of two religious attendants, who, after a wild ceremony, fill them with the supposed sanctifying, bitter liquid: then they approach near to the two central red and white seats, (which the traders call the war, and beloved cabbins) stooping with their heads and bodies pretty low; advancing a few steps in this posture, they carry their shells with both hands, at an instant, to one of the most principal men on those red and white seats, saying, on a bass key, Yâh, quite short: then, in like manner, they retreat backward, facing each other, with their heads bowing forward, their arms across, rather below their breast, and their eyes half shut; thus, in a very grave, solemn manner, they sing on a strong bass key, the awful monosyllable, O, for the space of a minute: then they strike up majestic He, on the treble, with a very intent voice, as long as their breath allows them; and on a bass key, with a bold voice, and short accent, they at last utter the strong mysterious sound, Wah, and thus finish the great song, or the most solemn invocation of the divine essence . . . The favoured persons, whom the religious attendants are invoking the divine essence to bless, hold the shells with both hands, to their mouths, during the awful sacred invocation, and retain a mouthful of the drink, to spurt out on the ground, as a supposed drink-offering to the great self-existent Giver; which they offer at the end of their draught. If any of the traders, who at those times are invited to drink with them, were to neglect this religious observance, they would reckon us as godless and wild as the wolves of the desert. After the same manner, the supposed holy waters proceed, from the highest to the lowest, in their synedrion: and, when they have ended that awful solemnity, they go round the whole square, or quadrangular place, and collect tobacco from the sanctified sinners, according to ancient custom."[28]

Still another description of this ceremonial is given by Stiggins:

"I shall now enter on their uniform custom of drinking their *Assēe* which is a very strong black tea used by them without any sugar,

[28a] See pp. 362-364.

[28] Adair, Hist. Am. Inds., pp. 46-48.

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made of eupon or Cassene leaves. Said drink is called by the white men among them the *Black drink*. It is customary at this time and may have been for ages back for the men to meet at their town house or square in every town at least once a week. In the Tuckabatchies, the principal town, they meet every morning to drink their asee, which is prepared for use in the following manner at all places. It is parched first in a large pot of their own manufactory of clay untill the leaves are brown. Then water is applied to the full of the pot and boiled by a man appointed to that service. After boiling, it is cooled in large cooling pans of the same manufactory by one of the oldest chiefs of the town. When it can be poured over his finger without scalding it is cool enough to drink. It is then put into two gourds that would hold near a gallon each with a hole in it of about three quarters of an inch in diameter at which hole they suck it out. Said gourds of assee are very ceremoniously handed round the square to every man by men selected for the purpose and drunk as made, without sugar or any other embellishment. It is singular how this tea operates on them after they drink it, for after they have drunk it they retain it in their stomack for near a half hour. They can discharge their stomack of it as often as they drink it, with seeming ease, spouting it out of their mouth as it were by eructation. After four or five drinks and discharges of their stomack at different times of near a quart at a time, the black drink being over they disperse at or near ten o'clock; it acts as a tonic, as it is drunk of a morning fasting. By the process their stomack is well rinsed and braced up. The taste of the black drink is not disagreeable being not unlike [that of] very strong black tea and nearly of a black colour. No doubt but their custom of drinking the black drink originated through political motives, viz., for the purpose of assembling the towns people frequently at their town house or square in order to keep them united." [2]

A few shorter accounts may be added. The first is by David Taitt:

"I went this morning to the [Tukabahchee] Town hot House where was only a few Old Men sitting and smoking Tobacco. When I went in the men present came a(nd) shook hands with me and offered me their Tobacco to smoke, afterwards they presented me with a Calabash filled with black drink made from the leaves of Casina which they parch in an Earthen pot till they are of a Dark brown Colour, they then put water upon them and boil it up till it is very Strong. They afterwards put a Strainer made of Split Canes into the pot and so take the drink out of the Strenner with a Callabash, entirely free from any leaves, they cool it in a Large Earthen bowle by heaving it up with gourds or Callabashes till

[2] Stiggins, Ms.

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they raise a froth on the Top as Strong as that on porter. When it is Cool enough they fill some gourds with (it) and Carry it into the hot house in winter or Square in Summer, and present it to the head man or King of the Town first and likewise to any Stranger that is present two or three men Singing while the others Drink. As soon as they have done Singing, they Receive the Callabashes from head man and Stranger and Exchange them that they may drink together, then it is handed all round to every person present without the Ceremony of Singing or Exchanging Cups."[28]

Claiborne incorporates the following in his History of Mississippi:

"When the Creeks meet in council they smoke and have what they call 'the black drink.' It is made of the leaves of the Cassina Yapon, a tree resembling the haw-bush. They put the leaves in a basket and deposit it in a long earthen pot and boil them over a fire made in the middle of the square under a scaffold. The ceremony of drinking 'the black drink,' says Gen. Dale, is this: When they are all seated around one of them takes the gourd, (kept for that purpose) holds it over the pot, pours into it the liquid and continues pouring in until it foams and runs over. He then takes the gourd to the Head Chief and begins making a long note, drawing out his breath longer than one would suppose he could; he then draws his breath a second time, giving another long note, but in a different key. He then carries the gourd to the other chiefs, giving each of them a grunt as he presents it. There is no fixed time for the latter to drink by; the head chief drinks during the making of the two notes. They drink a quart at a time as hot as they can bear it. Some 15 minutes afterwards they vomit the drink without any effort or artificial means. The virtue of the drink is exhiliration and warmth to the system."[29]

Bossu says:

"All the savages of the country of the Alabamas drink cassine; it is the leaf of an extremely bushy shrub; it is not larger than a black poplar (liard) but is serrated all around. They roast it as we make coffee, and drink the infusion with many ceremonies. When this diuretic drink is made, the young people go to offer it in gourds open like cups, according to the quality and rank of the chiefs and the warriors; that is to say to the Honored men, then to the other warriors, according to their rank. They preserve the same order when they offer the calumet for smoking; while you drink they shout with a loud voice and lessen it gradually; when you have stopped drinking they catch their breath and when you begin again they continue the same shouting. This kind of orgy lasts sometimes for six hours in the morning until two hours after noon. These savages are not

[28] Journal of David Taitt, in Mereness, Trav. in Am. Col., pp. 502-503.
[29] Claiborne, Miss., vol. I, p. 491.

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otherwise inconvenienced by their drinking, to which they attribute much virtue. They throw it up without effort and without inconvenience. The women never drink of this beverage which is made only for warriors. It is in such assemblies into which they (the women) are never admitted that they relate all of their news and deliberate over their political business, concerning war or peace."[20]

Milfort is another French traveler who has left us a description of this ceremonial:

"When the savages assemble for any reason they are accustomed before undertaking any business, to begin by smoking their pipes, and drinking a liquor which they make from the leaf of a tree, very common among them, and which it is claimed is a wild tea tree. It much resembles that of China, except that the leaf is much smaller. This tree is green during the entire year; its leaf is gathered only when it is to be served. When the savages wish to make use of it they have it boiled like coffee. When they prepare this liquor to drink in their assembly this is how they treat it. They put a certain quantity of tea leaves into an earthen vessel which they place over the fire; when they are dried sufficiently, they put in water in proportion to the quantity of leaves, and boil the whole. When they decide that the infusion is strong enough, they pass it through a basket like a sifter, and leave it in great earthen vessels destined to receive it for cooling. When it is not warmer than the natural heat of milk, one of the old men who has charge of this ceremony has it put into gourds at the top of which is an opening about two inches in diameter. It is presented for drinking in these gourds, and for this purpose it is passed in succession to each one of the members of the assembly."

He adds that it was later vomited up in order to assure clear headedness on the part of the members of the assembly in taking up the business in hand, particularly to insure against the effects of spirituous liquors.[21]

It is not clear that this ceremony was gone through on all occasions when the black drink was taken, because in some towns and at certain times it is said to have been taken every morning. In particular it was prescribed for those men who were appointed to preserve the buildings of the Tukabahchee Square. They were not permitted to eat until after they had taken it. It at least preceded all important assemblies. Adair, in pursuance of his pet theory of an Israelitish origin for the American Indians, lays great stress upon the syllables uttered by the bearers of the black drink, and he supposes that they were the syllables of the name Jehovah. It so happens that although I can add little or nothing regarding the ceremony in general I obtained a short account of it from Jackson Lewis which

[20] Bossu, Nouv. Voy., vol. II, pp. 41-42.
[21] Milfort, Mém., pp. 196-199.

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throws light upon just this point. He stated that formerly the black drink (ásí) was taken at the same time as the busk medicines, though it has now long been abandoned. But, while those who take the ordinary busk medicines go to the medicine pots to drink, the black drink was brought to the drinkers by four bearers. Each of these men would hand a pot of ásí to one who was to drink and when the latter placed it to his lips the bearer would utter a cry, which, as described to me, was something like this, "ă-a-a-a-a-a-a-a-a-a-a-a-a-a-a-a-a-a-a dĭ—i-i-i-i-i-i-i-i-i-i-i-i-i," both syllables being drawn out very long and gradually fading away. The drinker had to keep on imbibing the liquid until this cry came to an end. The cry was called the cry of the Yahola, a being described already, who with his companion Hayuya presided particularly over the square ground,[32] and it appears to have been uttered on other occasions, as for instance by the official who drew circles on the square ground just before the women's dance to indicate where the women were to stand. It is also said to have been applied to the cry used in calling a youth out when a new war name was to be conferred upon him. By some the medicine bearers were believed to be imitating the rapid fluttering of certain beetles or wasps, and the cries which they made were supposed to be in imitation of them, but this may have been merely an association by analogy. Questions of precedence were very carefully observed in the serving of ásí and were, I am informed, an occasion for frequent quarrels.

Minor Ceremonies Connected with the Square Grounds

The communal grounds with their various appurtenances were, of course, laid out in a new place with great ceremony. I have already given all that I know regarding the ceremonies performed in putting up the tcokofa.[33] The planting of the ceremonial ball post also took place with certain peculiar observances.

Wiley Buckner, a leading man among the Okchai Indians, said that he had heard that the Alabama Indians before setting up a new post laid a scalp down, placed a stone over that and set the butt end of the post above. Woksi mi'ko, a Hilibi Indian, had heard that, when the Okchai were going to put up a new post, they went into the woods, selected a pine tree suitable for the purpose, and felled it so that it would come down on some logs without touching the ground. Then they cut all of the sap wood away, leaving only the heart of the tree. This done, a number of persons would go out to it, raise it, and carry it to the place where it was to be erected without letting it touch the ground. They would then bring a scalp taken from an

[32] See p. 455.
[33] See pp. 177–181.